Hassan Alalaq et al., Epidemiology (Sunnyvale) 2015, 5:3
http://dx.doi.org/10.4172/2161-1165.S1.012

OMICS International
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3rd International Conference on
Epidemiology & Public Health

August 04-06, 2015 Valencia, Spain

Parents education and children nutritional status aged 2 to 5 in Zambia

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Background: The aim of this study is to evaluate the independent association of parental education on the nutritional status of the children using anthropometric measurements and body composition tools.

Methods: The WHO standardized age and sex-specific growth reference wasused tocalculate height for age Z-scores (HAZ), weight for age Z-scores (WAZ) and weight for height Z-scores (WHZ). Percent body fat was calculated using the equation developed by Lohman for skinfold. Logistic regression was used to evaluate the relationships of parent's education and the prevalence for stunting controlled for family size.

Results: 77 children were assessed (M=32, F=45) of whom 45(58.4%) were stunted expressed by HAZ <-2 (Mean Z score -2.33±1.24) and 18 (23.3%) had acute malnutrition expressed by WAZ <-2 (Mean Z score -1.25±1.12). About 41 (55.4%) children were born by mothers who had no education and 20 (29.8%) whose fathers had no education. The logistic regression showed that parent's education was not significantly associated with children nutritional status (p-value 0.3037).

Conclusion: Our results indicate that more than half of the children are stunted indicating chronic malnutrition. This may be a reflection of chronic food shortage or poverty which may affect food intake by the children. Parent's education seems to be insignificant strategy to improving children's nutrition in Zambia. Further studies are needed to assess other health problems in the area.

Biography

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